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THE
ANTI-SLAVERY REPORTER.

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I.—REPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

IN our last number we reviewed the Report of “the Society for the Conversion, Religious Instruction, and Education of the Negro Slaves in the West Indies.” The Report now before us is that of a Sister Society so closely connected with the former, that the portion of it which relates to the slaves in the West Indies, (that alone to which we mean to direct the reader's attention,) may be considered as a short abstract of the Conversion Society's report, being derived from nearly the same sources. The general tenor of the two being thus substantially identical; our notice of this one need be but brief.—After stating that they had received “*ample* proof of the *rapid* progress of Christian knowledge (in Jamaica,) especially among the coloured and negro population,” and that the demand, consequent on this progress, for bibles, prayer-books, &c. was great, the Society tell us that, “this demand seems to have arisen, *in a great measure*, from the success which has attended the measures which have been taken for educating the slave population, especially that for instructing them by means of the book-keepers and catechists on the estates.”—This would imply that the book-keepers and catechists were employed in teaching the plantation slaves to *read*; for otherwise it is not obvious how *their* teaching could have increased, *in any great measure*, the demand for books. But are book-keepers and catechists generally employed, or even permitted, to teach the slaves to read? The very contrary stands *proved* in our last number. If this fact be denied, let the plantations be named on which *reading* is taught to the slaves by either book-keepers or catechists, and let the number of slaves on such plantations, so taught, be given. But, indeed, the Appendix to this very Report is decisive on the point. The only return we find in it is from the Deanery of Middlesex, containing eight of the twenty-one parishes into which the island is divided, and there, it is expressly stated, that the instruction given by the book-keepers is *oral*.

On the pernicious effects of the system of employing book-keepers as organs of religious instruction, and especially of such instruction

orally conveyed, we have said so much in our last number that it seems unnecessary to add one word upon it. We cannot, however, quit it without expressing our regret that the Society for promoting Christian knowledge should have been induced, by the representations of their colonial correspondents, to give it their sanction. We have already assigned our reasons, and we need not now repeat them, for regarding the plan which has been thus sanctioned as much more calculated, generally speaking, to impede than to promote the diffusion of sound moral and religious knowledge, and, still more, of correct moral and religious practice, among the slaves.

Since the Report of the Conversion Society was reviewed in our last number, our attention has been called to an article in the *Christian Record of Jamaica*, (for April 1831, No. 8,) which remarkably confirms all the observations we have ventured to make upon it, and even goes beyond us, in depreciating the good effected, among the slaves, by means of that Society. The Editor exhibits, among other things, a document which, if it be true, is decisive on the subject; and he boldly challenges an investigation of its correctness. It is a detailed and specific enumeration of the slaves in Jamaica, who, in 1829, were receiving a "lettered and effective education," "in connection with the established church;" and it amounts on the whole, out of a population of 330,000, to 601, "of whom 391 are educated by the Church Missionary Society, and 210 by the bishop and the rest of the establishment." That is to say, for an annual sum of about 9,600*l.* expended from the public purse on the ecclesiastical establishment of Jamaica, aided by the funds of the Societies for the Conversion of Slaves and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 210 negro slave-children are being taught letters, so as to be put in the way of being able to read their bibles!

There is also in the same able work a paper on the proceedings of the last mentioned Society which peculiarly claims the attention of that venerable body, as well as that of its ally. In particular, the editor recurs again to that "book-keeper system," which we have ventured to reprobate. "Whilst on the one hand," he says, "the bishop and his dignified clergy have been strenuous in urging the necessity of all school-masters and catechists for the negroes being placed under episcopal authority, a considerable number of book-keepers are now employed in giving instruction, *entirely independent of it*, whose moral conduct, for the most part, is utterly detestable; that is to say, *if cursing and swearing, whoredom, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, &c., are detestable.*" "These are the characteristics, we fearlessly repeat, of the greater number of those who, under this system, are employed in the instruction of the slaves; and we as unwaveringly assert, that to expect any thing from such instructors, save contempt of religion, would be like expecting to 'reap grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.'"

The venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, cannot too early, or too anxiously, attend to this and other suggestions directly addressed to them in this valuable publication.

The Editor of the *Christian Record* also traces the increase of

marriage among the slaves, to the progress, and to the influence of the instructions either of the Church Missionary Society, or of the Moravians, the Methodists, or other Dissenters; the performance of the *mere ceremony* of marriage being the work of the regular clergy, they alone being authorized by law to perform it.

Not a word is said in this report of the open disregard or gross profanation of the Sabbath, which still prevails almost universally throughout the West India islands.

II.—REPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS, FOR 1830.

WE refer our readers to our second volume, No. 45, p. 416—427; No. 47, p. 457—461; and No. 48, p. 475—483; and to our third volume, No. 56, p. 170—174; for what has already passed respecting the plantations cultivated by slaves which are held in trust by this Society in the island of Barbadoes. It is with unfeigned satisfaction that we trace in their latest report, which now lies before us, decided symptoms of improvement in their system of management. The following are the resolutions which were unanimously adopted at a Meeting of the Society, on the 31st of January, 1831:—

“The Society, being desirous of affording all possible encouragement to the Slaves on the Codrington Estates to enter into lawful wedlock, and of connecting it with the great object of their gradual manumission, in order that their religious and moral conduct may lead the way to freedom, have adopted the following regulations: and their agricultural attorney will be instructed to do all in his power to give effect to their benevolent intentions:—

“1st. Slaves married according to the rites of the Established Church, and continuing to live together, to be entitled to exemption from compulsory labour one day in the week—such privilege to be forfeited by either party who may desert the other, or be guilty of immoral conduct.

“2d. All Slaves to be allowed to purchase one or more days’ exemption from compulsory labour, until they are completely enfranchised: every encouragement to be given them to employ such day or days with profit and advantage to themselves. The time of exemption from labour thus granted to, or purchased by, married women, to be so distributed as best to promote domestic habits and the comforts of their families.

“3d. A man and his wife to be permitted to purchase their joint freedom, for one or more days, at two thirds of the price which would be paid for the freedom of the two if separately purchased.

“4th. Freedom, so purchased, to be transmitted as an inheritance, to all the children born in lawful wedlock.

“5th. Manumissions to be granted from time to time to such Slaves as shall have recommended themselves to favourable notice by continued good conduct; preference, in case of equally good conduct, being given to those who have purchased for themselves the greatest number of days.

“6th. Task labour by the Slaves on the estate to be adopted as

as is practicable, and returns to be made quarterly to the Society of the extent to which this measure has been carried, and of its results.

" 7th. Although it appears that the use of the whip in the field, and as an instrument of female punishment, has already been discontinued on the Society's estates, and that offences are punished by moderate confinement, it is thought right to direct in express terms, first, that the whip shall not be carried into the field as a stimulus to labour, or as an emblem of authority; and secondly, that females shall in no case be punished by whipping.

" 8th. The manager to insert in a book, kept for the purpose, an account of every punishment, the age and sex of the Slave, the time and place of commission, the extent of punishment, by whom authorised and inflicted, and the witnesses present; an attested copy of the book to be transmitted half yearly to the Society through the Bishop of Barbadoes.

" 9th. The Slaves never to be removed from the estate by sale.

" 10th. Writing and arithmetic, as well as reading, to form part of the customary instruction in the schools on the estate.

" 11th. With a view to provide a safe place of deposit for the savings of the Negroes, the agricultural attorney to be directed to take measures for the establishment of a Savings' Bank under the guaranty of the Society." (p. 167.)

To these resolutions are annexed in the Report the following observations:—

" Such are the chief provisions which have been made for the moral and religious improvement, and for the gradual emancipation of the Slaves on the Codrington Estates. Many of them, it should be remembered, are now in operation, and the Society are fully pledged to carry the whole of them into effect, and to adopt, from time to time, such further measures as may be likely to accelerate the complete emancipation of the Slaves. They are willing to hope, that they may thus be made an instrument of extensive and permanent benefit to all classes of their West Indian fellow subjects, both by the measures which they themselves adopt, and by the example afforded to others, of an honest endeavour to satisfy the claims of humanity and religion, and to qualify the Slave for the great blessing of freedom, by lessons which may also prepare him for everlasting happiness in heaven. The Society are resolved to proceed in the discharge of their duty upon these principles and with these intentions, and look with humble confidence for the Divine blessing upon their honest endeavours." (p. 169.)

Had these resolutions, and the observations which accompany them, been all that this report contained, on the subject of the Society's slaves, we should have contented ourselves (while we overlooked any dubious or questionable provisions) with expressing our satisfaction generally in witnessing such an advance towards the adoption of sounder principles, and a more consistent conduct, on the part of this venerable body; and we should have abstained from the remarks which certain other passages in this Report compel us reluctantly to subjoin.

1. The first point to which we shall advert is *Marriage*. With

no disposition whatever to question the zeal of the venerable Society to promote marriage among their slaves, we still feel the want of some more distinct and specific details on this essential point. In a letter, indeed, from the Rev. J. Packer, the chaplain, dated July 8, 1830, we are told that on the 28th of May he had solemnized three marriages, and another on the very day he wrote, making a total of four; being all that we can discover to have *ever* taken place on these estates containing nearly 400 slaves. In another part of the same letter, Mr. Packer thus expresses himself: "The general attendance at chapel, I am concerned to say, on ordinary Sundays is not so full as could be hoped or expected; it is, however, not smaller than usual, and I look and pray for its increase. The congregations on festivals are always overflowing. There is one cheering circumstance—the congregation at evening service is larger than ever, and is principally composed of those who attend most constantly in the morning, so that what I may truly call my congregation is steady and constant; and among these are *many* of the *married* people, *some* of whom I am sure to see every Sunday morning and evening in their seats." (p. 161.)

Again, on the 30th of June, 1830, the Bishop of Barbadoes writes thus: "The Society will be happy to know that marriages are becoming more *frequent*. *Some* of the older and more influential people who had been long living together faithfully, set the example, and the younger are beginning to follow it." (p. 165.)

Now this language both of the bishop and of the chaplain would seem to imply that more marriages than three or four must have taken place before they wrote; and yet we cannot discover that a single marriage had ever occurred prior to the 28th of May, 1830. when three were solemnized, a fourth occurring only on the 8th of July after the bishop's letter was written. A list of all marriages with their dates would have obviated this ambiguity, and have been satisfactory to the subscribers.

2. There is the same vagueness and uncertainty as to the number of the slaves who attend divine service, or who are receiving, or have received, a sufficient degree of education, to enable them to read the Bible with intelligence. Such specifications could not fail to be gratifying to the public, especially as the Society, we rejoice to observe, state, that "they can show that the negro is capable of instruction, for they have instructed him; and that he is susceptible of the same devotional feelings, and may be brought under the controlling influence of the same divine laws, as ourselves." (p. 164.)

3. The venerable Society have thought it their duty, probably with a view to their own vindication, but, as we conceive, very gratuitously and unseasonably, to advance certain speculations of their own on the subject of colonial slavery, which we cannot altogether pass by without remark. "At once to enfranchise their slaves," they pronounce to be "a step which, they believe, would be followed by *more suffering and crime than have ever yet been witnessed under the most galling bondage*;" while, by making provision, as is now doing, "for their gradual emancipation; and by the introduction of free

labour into the Colonies," the Society will "afford an example which may lead to the abolition of slavery, without *danger to life and property*." This example, it is further added, will "shew the planters how they may gradually enfranchise their slaves without *destruction to their property*," while "to emancipate them suddenly and indiscriminately would only be to *injure the objects of our just and charitable solicitude*." (p. 163, 164.)

Disposed as we are to give the venerable Society the very fullest credit for the sincerity of these sentiments, we must still take leave, with all deference and respect, to consider them to be not only uncalled for, but to be the result of prejudices which arise, in part, perhaps, from the peculiar circumstances in which they themselves have been, and are still placed; but which, we are quite sure, are at war both with the christian principles of their own institution, and with all the results of experience which are applicable to the case. It will not be necessary for us to repeat, in this place, the facts and the arguments which, in our third volume, No. 70, we have already adduced in support of a directly opposite conclusion,—but, referring the venerable Society to that article, we think we have a right to challenge them to produce a single proof, in support of their confident and unhesitating assumption, that the extinction of personal slavery, by law, and with the willing and concurrent consent of the master, will be productive of the disastrous effects they have chosen to ascribe to it. We know of no such evidence. We never have heard of such evidence; all the evidence indeed being the other way. We think therefore, that we may fairly call on them, and on all who would retard for a single day the deliverance of their fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects from bondage, to produce proof, if they can, which shall satisfy the public, and their own consciences, that an emancipation of slaves, (however "sudden and indiscriminate") proceeding from the legal authorities of the state, and not only unresisted, but cheerfully acquiesced in by the master, has ever, in any one instance, led either to public disorder, or to the unhappiness and discomfort of the slaves, or to the deterioration of their moral, intellectual, and political condition.

But not only are the venerable Society's views of this subject in direct and unwarranted contrariety to this last proposition, but they cast a severe censure on the conduct recently pursued by the Government of the very Monarch whom, in almost the same breath, they have been loyally addressing on his accession to the throne of his ancestors. Six months have scarcely elapsed since that Government, on a mature consideration of all the circumstances of the case, and of all the objections that had been urged against the measure, issued orders for the full and unqualified emancipation, *at once*, of about two thousand slaves of whom it found itself unhappily possessed, and who were placed in circumstances infinitely less favourable than those of the slaves of the Propagation Society. On the point at issue, nothing can be more clear and explicit than the opinions expressed by Viscount Howick, speaking on the behalf of His Majesty's Government; and they form a singular contrast to those which are promulgated in the report before us. Instead of anticipating, with the Society, from such a measure

"*more suffering and crime than have ever yet been witnessed under the most galling bondage*,"*—instead of anticipating, with them, *danger and destruction to life and property*; his Lordship says, "I have stated sufficient facts to shew that it can be done with perfect security. I have not the least doubt that all these slaves will be able to maintain themselves without assistance, and that they will become useful members of the community to which they belong." *Mirror of Parliament* of 17th August, 1831.

Now even had these speculative opinions, of the distinguished personages who govern this Society, been better founded than we have shown them to be, it would only have been respectful towards their royal patron, to have somewhat qualified their denunciations against a measure which his Majesty's ministers had adopted, and were at that very moment carrying into effect; and which, we may take for granted, those ministers would neither have proposed nor executed, but in the entire conviction that it would *not* issue in the destruction of life or property, or "*in more suffering and crime than had ever yet been witnessed under the most galling bondage*."

Had not our remarks already extended to such a length, there still remain some minor points in this report, to which, and particularly to the occasional tone of the Bishop's communications, we should have thought it right to advert; but we forbear, as by this time our readers have sufficiently learnt to appreciate the value of eulogistic representations of the felicity which characterises Colonial Slavery, even when proceeding from the pen of a bishop, or of a bishop's secretary, on the other side of the Atlantic.

III.—MR. JEREMIE'S FOUR ESSAYS ON COLONIAL SLAVERY.

WE could do no more in our last number than announce the appearance of this highly important work. We propose, in this number, to make our readers better acquainted with both it and its author. He was appointed Chief Judge of the Royal Court of St. Lucia, in October, 1824. Up to that time he had never been led to give his thoughts to the question of slavery. As, however, he was going to fill an important station in a slave colony, he was induced to attend an Anti-Slavery Meeting which took place about that time; but here, he tells us, he was so struck with the absence of facts and evidence to establish the alleged iniquity of slavery, that the impression produced by his attendance was unfavourable to the cause of abolition. This was in 1824.—On reading over the recorded proceedings, however, of this very meeting, on his return to Europe in 1831, he states it as a singular circumstance that his views had been so greatly altered, by the intermediate experience he had had of slavery, that there was not a sentiment then uttered which he could not now fully adopt.—The error of Mr. Jeremie, in the first instance, was his misplaced expectation that, at a popular meeting of abolitionists, the whole chain of the

* Strong words these! The Society must indeed have formed very inadequate conceptions of what Colonial bondage has been, and still is.

evidence was to be exhibited which was necessary to convince one wholly uninformed on the subject of the real nature and effects of slavery. He ought to have been aware that the members of the Anti-Slavery Society had previously satisfied their minds on that point; and that they had now met, not to discuss or settle the evidence which had led them to join that Society, but to learn what progress had been made, or what hindrances had arisen, in the pursuit of their object; and to animate each other to perseverance in it. All those facts, with which Mr. Jeremie admits that he was still unacquainted, were familiar to them, and having been previously ascertained, were naturally assumed as the basis of their proceedings. When afterwards he himself had had an opportunity of witnessing the truth of their premises, which he then doubted or disbelieved, he no longer hesitated as to their reasonings or conclusions:—It would be thought very unreasonable in any one who should attend a meeting of a Bible Society in this country for the first time, were he to question the propriety of its object, merely because the members present did not enter on a full exposition of the evidence of the truth of the book they had united to circulate; this being a point on which their own minds had previously been made up. The case of this Anti-Slavery meeting was strictly parallel. The persons composing it required no proof as to the real nature and effects of Slavery: they had made up their minds on that point; and they had met, not to discuss its merits, but to co-operate in putting a period to its evils.

Thus prepossessed against the cause of the abolitionists, Mr. Jeremie repaired to St. Lucia, and there, for a time, what he saw and heard served to confirm his unfavourable prepossessions. He consulted, he tells us, the best colonial information; he even made a tour of the Island that he might see things with his own eyes, so as to ascertain for himself the actual condition of the slaves; and yet at the end of the first year of his residence, he was confirmed in his impression that the allegations of the abolitionists, respecting the general cruelties of the slave system, were downright misrepresentations; and this impression, which he scrupled not to avow officially, was laid on the table of Parliament.*

For the remarkable revolution which has since taken place in the views of Mr. Jeremie, on this subject, he then proceeds to account, and the whole of his statement is, as we shall see, highly instructive. But before we proceed to dwell upon it, it may be proper briefly to glance at some of the difficulties which such honourable and disinterested men as Mr. Jeremie are likely to encounter, in acquiring, even after a considerable residence in the Colonies, an adequate idea of the evils of slavery. We shall then be better able to appreciate those favourable views of the Colonial system which have frequently been given to the public by men filling the most eminent stations in society.

In the first place, as Mr. Jeremie well observes, (p. 5.) it was not until lately that “the slave enjoyed the liberty of freely communica-

* See our Second Volume, No. 29, p. 113.

ting with his protectors, or was invested with *any* of those rights which have rendered him, in *any* degree, independent of his manager." Again,—“With whom,” he asks, “do men of high rank and station associate; with the master or the slave; the merchant or the domestic? Whose hospitality do they share; in whose amusements do they partake; whose assurances alone can they receive? Are West Indians alone expected to expose their sores; to reveal, for their visitor's entertainment, the secrets of their plantations; to exhibit the dungeons, the collars, and the cart-whips?” But (you will perhaps be told by them) “they have inquired of the slaves themselves. But the slave could not bear witness if he would; nor did he dare if he could.” “I once,” adds Mr. Jeremie, “thought with them. But now that their condition is so far amended as that their evidence can be heard, and that Protectors are given them in whom they can confide, then comes out the sad truth.” (p. 35.) “The more exalted, therefore, the station of the individual,” our author goes on to argue, “the fewer are his opportunities of ascertaining the truth; and the longer his residence, without such opportunities, the more obstinate will he be rendered in error. Nor can this point be too strongly put. Very lately appeared in the public prints a glowing certificate, in favour of things as they stood thirty years ago, from one of Britain's most distinguished heroes. And yet, who, at this moment, defends things as they then stood? Not one of their own advocates!” “What, then, does such a certificate prove but that the system is still indefensible, or that NELSON,” and with him others of the same class, “knew nothing of it.” “Nelson was not a Protector of slaves. His duties did not bring him into contact with the slave labourer; he knew nothing of the interior of a plantation;” except only as information was to be acquired at the dinner table of the planters.

“This again,” he proceeds, “is an answer to not a few of those lively productions with which the press has recently teemed. What opportunity had the writers, attached to a garrison,* or forming part of a clerical dignitary's suite, to become familiar with the condition of the slave? Take that which has had the largest circulation.—The author of ‘Six Months in the West Indies,’ (Mr. Coleridge) mentions St. Lucia, describes its scenery, the sentiments of its inhabitants, the progress of its government. He was there about an hour, *saw* ships in the out bays, although these, with perhaps one exception, can have been but cocoa-nut trees. To reach the pavilion, (the Governor's house) he ascended rather better than half way up a moderate sized hill; he fancied himself in the clouds; and, to complete the illusion, *saw* stars in the fire-flies. Much of this arose, no doubt, from a wish to give point and brilliancy to his narrative; was meant good-naturedly; and expected to be received with every proper allowance. *But he who reflects how seriously the interests of humanity may*

* This alludes to a work bearing the name of “Bailey,” entitled “Four Years Residence in the West Indies”—certainly, from beginning to end, a tissue of gross (we do not say wilful) misrepresentations.

*thus be compromised, cannot but regret that talents and wit and good intentions have been so perverted."**

More than four years ago (see our Second Volume, No. 30, p. 135) we ventured to pronounce a judgment, not very dissimilar to Mr. Jeremie's, on this gay but mischievous publication. "Its effect," we then declared, "whatever might have been the writer's purpose and motive; and these we did not mean to arraign; had undoubtedly been, *greatly to deceive and mislead the public.*"

But to return to Mr. Jeremie:—

Scarcely had his favourable judgment of slavery, above referred to, been transmitted to England and laid before Parliament, than a succession of circumstances occurred of a nature which led him gradually, but at length completely, to change the whole current of his opinions on this subject, and to force from him the reluctant admission of his having misconceived, and officially misrepresented, the real state of the case. It will be impossible for us to follow him through the whole of these most interesting but revolting details; we must confine ourselves to a mere sample of them.

The New Slave Code, drawn up by Mr. Jeremie, and by which something like protection was extended to the slave, had scarcely been promulgated, when a negro came before him with a collar riveted round his neck, from which projected three prongs of ten inches in length; and at the end of each of these, three smaller prongs of an inch long. This collar, with its double set of prongs, was attached to a chain reaching to fetters surrounding his ancles. His back and limbs also were wealed from neck to foot, and the sufferer declared that he had been kept thus collared, and enchained, and fettered, by night and by day, for some months; during which he constantly worked in the field, and on his return from it, was immured in a solitary cell.—How the man could have lived in this state for months it is difficult for us to conceive: the collar with its prongs, must have made it impossible for him to lie down.—His crime was running away.

Three gentlemen of *reputed* humanity, the Procureur du roi, and two commandants of quarters, were sent by Mr. Jeremie to investigate the affair. Their written report not only left the complainant's statement unshaken, but brought to light the fact that, on the same estate, were three other men similarly collared and fettered, and a woman covered with sores and in chains, which chains she had worn for nearly two years. They further reported, (by way of extenuation as it would seem) that the collars, &c. were of the same description as those *in use* in the Island; and *that the estate*, (the estate on which these abominations existed) "*was well managed; and that the arrangements upon it were good!*" All this took place in 1826.

These torturing collars were put down by proclamation, as was also the following mode of punishment, which was found in use on the same estate as a substitute for female flogging, then recently forbidden. "The

* And yet it is from the flimsy work of this flying voyager that the West Indian Reporter has had to borrow its motto.

women were hung by the arms to a peg, raised so high above their heads that the toes alone touched the ground; the whole weight of the body resting on the wrists, or on the tips of the toes." (p. 6.)*

The offending parties in these cases underwent the penalties of the new law.

About the same time a cause came on, in appeal, before Mr. Jeremie, in which a manager sued a proprietor for his wages, and the proprietor pleaded, as a set off, the value of two of his slaves killed by the manager. In the proprietor's counter-statement, after several items of trifling amount, as soap, cash, candles, &c. came the following, being by far the largest, viz.—

"For the value of John the Cooper, flogged to death by you, and then buried in the cane piece, 400 dollars."

"For the price of the negress Mary Clare, who died by bruises received from you, 300 dollars."

In the recorded judicial proceedings on which this appeal was grounded, the proprietor's extraordinary claim of a deduction, on account of two of his slaves having been murdered, is met, on the part of the manager, with a levity still more extraordinary. "He had expected," he said, "objections that might cause delay in the payment of his wages, but he did not anticipate a *payment in this coin*." It is not the manager, he argues, who is to bear the loss of proprietor's Negroes. If the defendant had had any legal rights of this kind he might long since have made use of them. "The speculation is new," he adds, "but it will not take." The two articles, therefore, of "John the Cooper" and "Mary Clare," amounting jointly to 700 dollars, are decidedly objected to by the manager.—The pleadings on the other side were in the same strain of disgusting levity, the proprietor telling the manager that the "coin" was not so bad as he would make it, as he must have forgotten his own note of hand for 300 dollars, the price he had agreed to pay for killing Mary Clare. His note to this effect was actually produced; and a witness was also brought forward to prove the flogging to death of John the Cooper.—With all these facts and pleadings before him, the judge of first instance, who had tried the cause, and from whose decision the appeal had been brought, discussed them as mere matters of account. He allowed the note of 300 dollars, for the murder of Mary Clare by *his* bruises, to be deducted from the amount of the manager's wages; but he considered the

* The substitute for female flogging ordained by the Trinidad Order (the Model Order) and thence unsuspectingly introduced by Mr. Jeremie into St. Lucia, and there legalized by the code which he himself (unaware of the nature of the instrument) had framed, was scarcely, if at all, less severe than that which he had put down. We mean what are called "Field stocks," and which Mr. Jeremie asserts that he found might become "the most cruel picketing." "They are," he says, "in the shape of a pillory; the hands are inserted in grooves which may be raised to any height above the head, and the feet in other grooves at the bottom; the toes alone being made to touch the ground. The body is thus suspended in mid-air, its whole weight resting on the wrists and toes. In Trinidad they fix leaden weights to the wrists which add considerably to the torture. These field stocks are a legalized substitute for the whip, and even pregnant women are not exempted from it." "What," asks Mr. Jeremie, "has humanity gained?" p. 7.

proof in the case of John the Cooper to be insufficient. While the cause was before Mr. Jeremie, and after the appeal had been re-argued in the same tone and spirit which had prevailed in the inferior courts, the manager died, and further proceedings as to his crime were necessarily stayed.

But who was the proprietor who had been defendant in this action? He was Mr. Jeremie's own immediate predecessor in office as chief justice, for thirteen years, during a part of which this very cause had been undergoing public discussion, and he was then one of his assessors;—nor was he removed from a seat in the Royal Court, but on the application of Mr. Jeremie, to that effect, for some other offences against the Slave law.

Such was the kind of protection and justice, observes our author, which, at the time of his accession to office, he found meted out “by both courts, and by nearly all the higher authorities.”—“That two men should venture thus to traffic in murder is in itself awful; but even this is outdone by the calm indifference with which the pleadings, the account itself, and the very judgments, prove the case to have been contemplated” by the whole community.

The fact of overworking the slaves, which has always been alleged, by the abolitionists as a main cause of their decrease, was so stoutly denied by the white community of St. Lucia, and even by the most respectable among them, that Mr. Jeremie could not hold out against what appeared to be the overwhelming weight of evidence on the point, and for a long time he was disposed, in his official communications, to defend the planters from this charge. But at length his attention was called to an estate, the attorney of which was a member of the Privy Council, and the manager of which was looked up to as a leading man of his class, and was a frequent guest in the highest society in the Island. The complaint was, as usual, of ill-treatment on the side of the slaves, and, on the part of the manager, of insubordination. The result of the inquiry was that it was proved, and indeed admitted, that the gang had, in the course of the preceding crop

“been divided and worked as follows: they worked twenty-four hours each spell, rested six, worked twelve; rested twelve, worked twelve; rested six, then again worked twenty-four and rested six, and so on;—there being three spells or watches, two in the field, and one in the boiling-house; and the latter working twenty-four hours in succession, and resuming their labour in the field next morning. Now, deduct, from these six hours, the time necessary to cook their victuals (for no time was allowed them for meals), to clean themselves, to take their meals, to undress and dress themselves, and families, if they had any; and what remained for rest? When the fact was thus placed beyond question, other estates were at once mentioned where the same practice was adopted; and so little was it thought of, that, in an inquiry to which the attorney of the estate was a party, this very manager was examined, and expressed his surprise at being charged with cruelty, since, as he says on oath, this happened but seldom, and when it did occur, he had always allowed his slaves to take six hours rest in the course of two days. In other words, his management was lenient, as he never had worked his gang more than forty-two hours together!

“Such is practical slavery, and such the difficulties which prevent detection, even by those most thoroughly conversant with the subject.”

We cannot afford space to follow Mr. Jeremie through various

other details of the most revolting kind which compelled him to abandon his former, and adopt his present, views of the general spirit and character of communities, demoralized and debased by the practice of slavery.

"In short," observes Mr. Jeremie, "the principle, which seems to have been universal, was best expressed by a gentleman, on his son's being arrested on a charge of killing one of his Negroes. His remark was, 'What a noise about a brute!' (*Quel bruit pour un animal!*)—and, with this, every thing is explained. Once assume that a gang of Negroes is nothing more than a drove of cattle, and all these cases will be so many offences under Mr. Martin's act."

The effect of the enormous power possessed by the proprietor, he adds, is such as to render him callous, not only to the life of his inferiors, but of his equals, and this truth Mr. Jeremie illustrates by the following occurrence:—

"Six months after I was in the country, a case of infanticide was reported to me: A new-born child had been found in a ditch, choked with earth, and its mouth split from ear to ear,—it was still alive. The case was forthwith inquired into with all the spirit and zeal that a subject of the nature merited; but so far from carrying public opinion with me, this interference was deemed very unreasonable and uncalled for. The expressions I actually heard were 'Why meddle with such nonsense?' (*'quelles niaiseries!'*) and as nonsense the thing seemed to be treated. I, however, persisted, and issued a warrant against the mother, a young lady of property and rank, and this was deemed pure brutality. She remained some weeks in the island, residing openly at her relative's, a public officer; but seeing I was determined to brave the consequences, she withdrew unmolested to Martinique."

We will now turn to another feature of Colonial policy connected with Mr. Jeremie's change of sentiment, and which it is especially necessary, at the present moment, to place in its true light. We allude to the convenient use, so often made by the Colonists with a view to obstruct the progress of reform or to prevent the interference of the Mother Country, of rumours of plots among the slaves; which rumours are supported by every species of fraud and falsehood, and even in some cases by the most wanton destruction of Negro life. Indeed, no sooner had the public interest been excited in favour of the slave than plots were fabricated, and even streams of blood shed, apparently for no other purpose but to alarm the timid in this country, and to bring odium on the abolitionists.—We might here refer, among other Colonies, to Barbadoes, Demerara, Jamaica, and Antigua, and still more recently to Tortola. In some cases, indeed, the slaves had been goaded into something like turbulence, and then the Negro blood unsparingly and unresistingly shed has become the proof of their rebellion. In other cases the proofs are only to be found in judicial proceedings, involving a perversion of all the forms of law, and a disregard of all the principles of justice. In other cases mere groundless rumours and alarms have proved sufficient for the slave-holders' purposes.

The authentic details given by Mr. Jeremie, on this subject, are extremely curious and instructive, and as they may serve to give the British public some faint idea of the extent and audacity of the impostures of this kind practised by the holders of slaves, for the preser-

vation of their unhallowed power, we shall dwell upon them at some length.

When Mr. Jeremie, in 1826, first began to execute the law which he had framed, and which the planters had vainly hoped would have remained a dead letter, such reports were spread of discontents, insubordination, and even actual mutiny, that the principal officers of the Government were employed to investigate them; and they found them to be pure inventions. (p. 6.)

At a later period, when from the collusive and unfaithful conduct of the local government, as has been most clearly established in evidence, a hope was diffused throughout St. Lucia that both Mr. Jeremie and his measures of reform might happily be got rid of, an extensive conspiracy was formed for that purpose, the course of which is thus described by our author:—

“Rumours the most unfounded were at once set afloat, estates were specified where the gangs were in utter disorder, nine or ten especially, and one of them, where owing to the slave law having avowedly been neglected, the manager had been cautioned. This estate was said to have been abandoned by the Negroes; some to have fled—the whole to have so neglected their duty, that the produce had diminished from sixteen to three hogsheads per week. The slaves, it was said, had fled to the woods, mountains, and ravines;—Negroes had been taken up with large bundles of newspapers of the precise year when the slave law was promulgated, (1826,) and it was added, that gangs from the most distant and unconnected quarters had struck, and had also sought refuge in the woods after destroying their master's property, as manufacturers destroy machinery at home.

“Accordingly, militia detachments were sent out, headed by field officers, in addition to two permanent detachments, in various directions, in search of the insurgents: five were sent out from one quarter,—three from a second,—three from a third,—three from a fourth; and thousands of ball cartridges were distributed throughout the country. The white troops were to be quartered on the refractory estates; and the planters in one of the quarters and its neighbourhood were desired to turn out with their best negroes; this description of force alone amounting to several hundred men.

“Next, the Governor himself went into the mountains, with a numerous staff, to point out the exact plan of operations by which that insurrectionary movement was to be put down. Then a militia order was to be issued, and read at the head of the detachments, comparing these various convulsions, (‘though it had not quite reached that height,’) to the melancholy period of 1796, when it cost Great Britain 4,000 men, headed by Abercrombie, to restore order in St. Lucia alone.

“Now, what was the fact? In the whole of that part of the island, where the Governor had taken on himself the direction of the troops; where these detachments under their colonels, had scouted the woods, mountains, and ravines; it appeared there were exactly eight negroes in the bush, including females. The bundles of newspapers were a piece of wrapping paper, about the size of a man's hand, on which an ignorant slave had made a few crosses, and produced as his pass. The story of the destruction of property was a pure fiction. The specific complaints proved to be worse than frivolous, and the only gang, where there had been the least movement, was one with respect to which the proprietor, on a subsequent enquiry, has been proved never, since the promulgation of the slave law, to have clothed his negroes, and where they had been made to get up to labour in the field by moonlight. On that occasion, fifteen had left their owner in the evening, and had presented themselves in the morning to the next planter, to intercede for them. He had done so, and they had returned quietly to work before any of these extraordinary measures were taken.

"In short, it was proved, that throughout the island only the usual average, 5 in 1,000, (taking the whole slave population) which is probably less than in the best disciplined regiments in the service, were away from their estates; and this too was at the very commencement of crop, when the number of runaways is always largest.

"Again, in October, another panic was attempted to be created but was put down. Indeed, throughout the year, endeavours in every shape were made to prove the impracticability of continuing these new regulations.

"But how did the matter end? By placing beyond question the advantages resulting from them."

This was done by means of a public inquiry, instituted by Mr. Jeremie, (the details are too long for insertion,) which not only served to disprove, on the testimony of the planters themselves, all the allegations of injury arising from the new slave code, but to extort from them a reluctant admission of the past prevalence of many of the evils which that code was specially intended to obviate. The whole of these details are well worthy of careful consideration.

But it is impossible for us to follow Mr. Jeremie through all the topics of his *Four admirable Essays*, which embrace 1. "The General Features of Slave Communities;" 2. "The General Theories involved in the consideration of the question of Slavery, as Colour, Climate, Monopoly, Free labour;" 3. "The Ameliorations introduced into St. Lucia, and practicable elsewhere;" and 4. "The Results of the Measures hitherto adopted, and a view of the further steps to be taken to promote the final annihilation of slavery." Under each of these heads we find a copious fund of valuable observations, the result of reflection and experience, on which we shall probably have hereafter to draw very largely. We were particularly gratified by Mr. Jeremie's able and conclusive confutation, or rather, we may say, demolition, in his second Essay, of Major Moody's absurd and mischievous theory of "the philosophy of labour," which, for a time, so strangely beguiled and bewildered even the acute though paradoxical mind of Mr. Wilmot Horton.

We must content ourselves with two brief extracts from this part of his work. The first respects the free people of colour, the second the negro race.

"A young gentleman, the son of a judge of that island, by a dark coloured woman, had received from his father a good plain education at Liverpool; he spoke English and French, and wrote both languages with ease and fluency; but being, from his descent, inadmissible to any office of respectability, his father had had the good sense to bring him up to a respectable trade, that of a watch-maker. Soon after I arrived at St. Lucia, this young man was recommended to me as a clerk. Having kept him in that capacity for six years, an opportunity offered of bringing him to the bar. He accordingly obtained a commission; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that this young gentleman is now one of the leading advocates of the court and enjoying, in a high degree, the public confidence."

"To proceed to a still more striking instance of the capacity of the Negro:—It happened that several slaves took refuge from Martinique, where the slave-trade is avowedly carried on, to St. Lucia, in 1829. This caused a discussion, the effect of which was to make it generally known, that on a foreign slave's reaching a British colony, he, by Dr. Lushington's bill, becomes free; and in consequence of this discussion, several, exceeding 100 in number, came over in the

year 1830. Here were persons leaving a country of unmitigated slavery; persons precisely in the condition in which our whole slave population may be supposed to have been some thirty years ago, by those who maintain that the condition of the slave has improved;—here were persons described by their government as incendiaries, idlers, and poisoners. When I left the colony in April last, some were employed for wages in the business they were best acquainted with; some as masons, and carpenters; some as domestics; others in cleaning land, or as labourers on estates; whilst about twenty-six had clubbed together and placed themselves under the direction of a free coloured man, an African—one of the persons deported from Martinique in 1824. These last had erected a pottery at a short distance from Castries: they took a piece of land, three or four cleared it, others fished up coral and burnt lime, five or six quarried and got the stones and performed the mason-work, the remainder felled the timber and worked it in; and the little money that was requisite was supplied, in advance, by the contractor for the church, on the tiles to be furnished for the building. This pottery was completed, a plain structure, but of great solidity, and surprising neatness. Thus had they actually introduced a new manufacture into the country, for which it was previously indebted to our foreign neighbours, or to the home market. All this had been effected simply by not interfering with them, by leaving them entirely to themselves: they were mustered once a month, to shew that government had an eye on them, and then allowed full liberty. One man only was sick in the hospital, and he was supported by the contributions of his companions."

It appears that, in the small Colony of St. Lucia, containing only 13,000 slaves, 2,360, more than a sixth of the whole, belong to the coloured class; and that in the town and port of Castries, the same class own more than half the rental of the town, and a full half of the registered shipping both in number and value.

Approving so highly as we do of the general scope and tenor of Mr. Jeremie's work, it is but right that we should apprise our readers that there is a point or two on which his views and ours are not strictly coincident. We allude more particularly to the subject of compensation. Our differences, it is true, are not very wide, but even if they were, we should hardly deem it necessary now to enter upon them. They will be obvious at first sight to any one who will take the trouble of reading Mr. Jeremie's pamphlet, pp. 116—122, and comparing with them No. 75 of our present volume, pp. 89—104.—We conclude with most warmly recommending the work to our readers, our brief sketch being wholly inadequate to convey a due impression of the value of its important information, which will abundantly reward the time required for its perusal.

IV.—CONVENTION WITH FRANCE ABOLISHING THE SLAVE TRADE.

WE hail, with satisfaction and delight, the announcement, in the King's Speech at the opening of the present Session of Parliament, of a convention with France for the effectual suppression of the African Slave Trade, the basis of which is the "concession of reciprocal rights, to be mutually exercised, and which will enable the naval forces of the two countries, by their combined efforts, to accomplish an object which is felt by both to be so important to the interests of humanity."

